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## POEMS









*Paul Marietta.*

*The* POEMS *of*  
PAUL MARIETT



NEW YORK  
MITCHELL KENNERLEY  
MCMXIII

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PAUL MARIETT

*October 24, 1888—March 14, 1912*

IN the Spring of 1910, six of us, with one exception undergraduates in Harvard College, used to eat dinner together about as often as we could induce an unwilling secretary to send out postcards and collect the group. We had begun with no small amount of self-consciousness by regarding each other as types; a claim to membership was as poet, dramatist, musician, scientist, romantic, reformer. After dinner we would gather about a fire and start a discussion. Inevitably the topic of the evening seemed to involve all human interests, so that arguments about religion would end in a quarrel over Chesterton's sanity and considerable heartsearching as to whether soap and socialism were really middle-class fads. Those evenings are memorable in many ways, but chiefly for what they gave us of Paul Mariett.

Not long after, the cancer of which he died took hold of him. That Spring he overflowed

with life: feeling his own power, he was full of plans, and the grim silence which he had formerly maintained began to break into colorful confidence. His appetite, for everything, was enormous. Almost for the first time we began to see that the real Paul was a fellow of turbulent interests and subtle perceptions, who had carefully protected himself by a brusque and unsociable manner. Beneath the austerity was a brilliant, livid, and audacious love of living. He was shy about his delicacies and bashful about his virtues; his vices he loved to parade. Paul rather enjoyed the reputation of being something of a man-eater. Of all things he did not want, the prettifying touch is, I believe, the one he despised most. He himself was brutally direct; he liked others to be so, too. For all the conventional attitudinizing of the poet over sweetness and light he had a bitter scorn; he could hate with zest; he believed that hate was a good robust virtue. To all kinds of softness Paul was a hard bed indeed, and to muffled personalities and finicky souls he was a cleansing gale.

You had to brace your feet to meet him—there was no chance to shirk behind a graceful pose, or a cultivated one, or any other kind of



barrier between yourself and him. That was his genius: people became closer knit and more self-contained when he was around. You could not coddle your difficulties in him, for he made you ashamed of your slackness.

Paul enjoyed life. He had, it seemed, no listless pleasures. When he ate it was with tremendous relish; a book was something to be attacked and beaten till he had subordinated it; swimming and snowshoeing he loved partly for the strain and rack of them. He had us all intimidated by his interest in boxing. Languages Paul seemed to learn with no trouble at all. For a time he carried a Portuguese translation of the Gospels in his pocket in order to teach himself Portuguese. The classics he knew,—they were a natural background to a really vast culture which he absorbed silently. With his music, and his languages and literatures, he was a peculiarly learned undergraduate. Yet he hated pedantry so vigorously, and showed so terse and unacademic a manner, that not even his closest friends were entirely aware of the very solid foundations of Paul's literary interests.

This learning did not dull his appetite for existence, and that is what distinguishes him

from most undergraduate poets. They like life nicely selected, and their passions are carefully strained through a literary tradition. No doubt they often sing melodiously and show surprising competence in verse. But their passions are Swinburne's or Shelley's; somebody else has sweated for them. Paul Mariett was too genuine a lover of life to accept some one else's version of it. He struggled violently, sometimes aimlessly, against the ordinary technique of passion, like a man caught in a snarl of rope. Now and again he would half free himself: I think some of the poems in this volume prove that. But the struggle was only at its beginning when he was felled by the disease which finally killed him. It is our faith that with time he would have won.

The tragic feeling which runs through so much of his work is, I am sure, not entirely ordinary undergraduate pessimism. It is a genuinely tragic feeling, a gift of nature's rather than a handicap. Nietzsche speaks of the pessimism of strength and describes it as "an intellectual predilection for what is hard, awful, evil, problematical in existence, owing to well-being, to exuberant health, to *fullness* of existence." In Paul Mariett, the tragic is always

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active, sharp and colored; it was not so much a regret over life as an insight into it.

This little volume is a loose scattering from his verse. He wrote much prose and some plays besides. Two of his stories were published in *The Atlantic Monthly*; other stories and some essays were printed in various undergraduate magazines at Harvard. A play of his was performed by the Harvard Dramatic Club. All of the man is not in this work,—the expression he was seeking does not come easily, and no one knew better than he that he had achieved it only now and then.

His illness lasted two years. After a while no opiate dulled the agony he suffered night and day. It was an inexplicable affliction,—one of those terrors in existence for which philosophies and religions have not yet accounted. Paul Mariett had only his sheer human valor to oppose to it. He stood his fate; racked in body, his soul was never sick.

WALTER LIPPMANN



# P O E M S

## THE MASTER WOULD IMPROVISE

**I** SAT at my instrument and began to build.  
I built me a palace:

I built me an edifice of molten notes.

I took the keys and cunningly interwove

My fingers in a gleam of black and white:

The sound rose like a mist between my hands

Flashing,

Halting,

Hovering,

Pouncing,—

And forth,

Lo!

My palace.

And first I laid a firm foundation,

A solemn, granite, ponderable bass,

Deep,

Very deep;

Notes, Notes, Notes. Each a weight upon  
the heart,

(Such weights make firm foundations.)  
Then  
I fashioned the framework.  
Trembling trellises  
Climbed to the highest wreaths of tinted  
    clouds,  
Fragile,  
Dainty,  
Evanescent, spiring, flashing white and arch-  
    ing,  
Curving to meet in delicate, tinkling sound,  
Like frozen aspirations  
Halted on a heavenward journey:  
A sound the wafered, silver ice on shallow  
    pools  
Gives when it shivers to unheeded gems.  
And these were strewed with notes of blue,  
Sheathed, lapped, embraced with notes of  
    blue,  
Yes; turquoise blue, and cuprous blue, and  
    livid, living green,  
Shading and sliding indistinguishably  
To grey and muffling black  
At the foundation;  
But, as they neared the summit,  
Growing translucent—like green amber.  
Then, at the top,

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My fretted arches  
Would lean together,  
Would be wedded  
Beam unto beam, diligent to create a roof;  
Suddenly  
They began to redden,  
To turn rosy,  
(And all the while my fingers interlaced  
Swifter and yet more swift)  
Then to grow golden;  
(My hands a ghostly mist)  
Pale, lambent fires  
Played about them,  
In,  
Out,  
Around,  
A dazzling dance;  
Soft tongues,  
Beautiful,  
Wonderful.  
Ah! . . .  
Ah!  
Ah! !  
How shall my eyes endure to make the  
roof?  
Such light!  
Such light!

I sat at my instrument.  
My hands, lax, unstrung,  
Held to the crushing disillusionment—  
The black cacophony. . . .  
My head was bowed.  
I wept.



## THE TEMPLE OF AZZI-REP

**T**HE gilded idol is broken now  
That faced to the east to see the sun;  
The temple rafters warp and bow  
At the weight of ages thrust thereon;  
And, ah! the sadness,  
The shadowing sadness,  
The strange, cold sadness for life undone!

Red lizards run on the battered step,  
Branches tangle the columns and shards;  
Broken the power of Azzi-Rep,  
Forgotten his worship, his name, his words—  
But, O! the sadness,  
The strange cold sadness,  
The enveloping sadness that shrouds and  
guards!

One God persists for ever and aye,  
And small gods shrivel and fail in that Sun;  
But still, in the moonlight, the old gods lay  
Mystic spells on the heart and the tongue—  
And, ah! their sadness,  
Their potent sadness,  
A terrible sadness that never is done!

## TWO FEASTS

THE feast was at its height. The courtiers  
reeled

In drunken waves along the pillared hall;  
The table bore the brunt of scattered foods,  
And garlands petal-pillaged by the rout,—  
Where, here and there, a woman crowned with  
wreaths

Made rosy showers of her lover's favors,—  
And dishes overturned, and viands fouled,  
Half-cleft pomegranates gaping like a wound,  
And dusky grapes too lavish of their juice,  
And honeyed dates like ingots of fine gold,  
And curious breads, and dainty, broken  
sweets—

All swept together in a riot of waste,  
Wherein the inebriate wallowed, sang, and  
kissed:

Only the goblets held their contents firm.  
The walls and ceilings pulsed and spilled the  
sound;

The pillars through the reek of perfumed haze  
Made oscillations at each drunken crash.  
Only, above, beside a space of wall,

Quite smooth, save for some pictured, antique  
men,

Walking in stilted way along a dado,  
There loomed a clumsy, carven, winged sphinx,  
His features, gross and bland, endued with  
calm:

A beast himself, he contemplated beasts.

Beneath, high seated on an ivory throne,  
Belshazzar sate, and, with his hundred queens,  
Drank deeply, brushing with a crisp black beard  
A greedy goblet which the eunuchs filled.

There rose a courtier in the lower hall;  
And standing on the flower-strewn tessellations,  
He cried aloud, addressing the great king:

“O King! O Conqueror! O Mighty Lord!  
O Lord of adamantine Babylon,  
Of Babylon which lives for aye and aye,  
Of Babylon the indestructible—  
Bring us the golden vessels of the god,  
The god that dwelt in Israel, but now,  
Supine beneath the feet of iron Baal,  
Lies vanquished, and whom the gracious Queen,  
Our Lady Ashtaroth, has put to scorn—  
Bring us the golden vessels of that god,  
That we may give them to our cup-bearers,  
That we may drink and curse and shame his  
vaunt,

Bring us the golden vessels! . . .”

Nothing loth,  
The bearded king, with vinous-spattered mouth  
Gave forth an order. Came a gleam of gold,  
In flash and speck and point of golden fire,  
In sparkle, fleck, and glance, and coruscation,  
In shimmer, sheen, and diamond crenelation,  
In fettered dance of glowing, golden fire,  
As eunuchs raised the sacred vessels high  
Aloft, and set them down before the king;  
And seven lordlings took the seven cups,  
And agile servants bore the brimming bowls,  
And filled.

Belshazzar staggered to his feet,  
A thousand thundered as he raised his cup—  
And silence rang adown the quivering  
hall. . . .

For, yonder, near the sphinx, upon the wall,  
(Quite smooth it was, save for the antique men  
That walked in stilted way along the dado)  
Appeared the substance of a clenched hand,  
Clear-glowing with a fierce, supernal light,  
Which stretched a steady finger to the wall,  
And traced a single line of lettering,  
Thus: *Mene Mene Tekel Upharsin*,  
And ceased, and vanished like the levin-flash,  
Leaving the letters burning on the wall

In faintly-quivering, frozen lines of fire.

Belshazzar wavered back against his throne,  
And stared aghast. His nerveless hands un-  
closed,

The cup clashed down upon the marble floor,  
The silvery echo sped, and, in the coigns,  
Died lingeringly and faltered out an end:  
A perfect silence brooded o'er the room.

Without, beneath the shadowy aisles of  
night,  
A trumpet blared defiant, hard, and high!  
Another and another, till the air  
Was vibrant with the timbre of their blasts!  
And savage yells rang horrid in the streets,  
And bloody cries, and sharp despairing  
shrieks. . . .

The barbarous Mede had battered in the  
gates!

## II

Without, the air was grey with sodden snow,  
The asphalt streets were slimy, wet, and black,  
Grotesque with goblin mirrorings of light,  
Of lamp and shop and whirring motor car,  
And roaring trains in beaded lines of light,  
And club and theatre, hotel and house,

All bright and radiant, instinct with light—  
The light which marks the City's nightly fête.

A great hotel gave out from porch and front,  
And twenty towering rows of layered windows,  
Unstinted floods of yellow radiance.

Within, the genial feast was at its height.

A wide-walled, ample, crimson dining-hall,

Ornate and ponderous with gilt and jade,

And carpet treacherous with crimson plush,

And marble, perfect as the purple snow,

And softly bright with rosy-shaded light,

Was clamorous with noisy revelry—

Voices that laughed out ringingly and clear;

The soft and murmurous sound of whispering;

The hard metallic clatter of the plates;

The cluck and gurgle of the flowing wine.

The tables bore the brunt of scattered foods

And flowers petal-pillaged by the rout;

Black-coated men, bright-eyed and flushed of  
face,

Smiled vacantly at women crowned with jewels;

And ever, through the throng and maze of  
feasters,

The stealthy waiters wound their silent way,

The walls and ceilings pulsed and spilled the  
sound;

The pillars thro' the reek of odorous haze

Made oscillations at each drunken shout.  
Only, above, upon a marble base,  
Was poised a dainty, fragile, winged Love,  
His features modelled to a frozen mirth:  
A beast himself, he fraternized with beasts.

Beneath the statue, at the table's head  
Upon a massy seat of antique oak,  
A bearded man sat, gazing at the throng,  
Complacent, haughty, calm, and satisfied,  
His clumsy shoulders square against his chair,  
His thick-set fingers spread about a glass;  
From this he sipped from time to time, or spoke  
A word to women at his either hand.

Below, there rose a slim and handsome  
youth,  
And stood beside his chair, and swayed and  
smiled,  
And looked up at the bearded man and spoke:  
"And truly, Sir, a charming gathering,  
A pleasant company, a pleasant feast,  
And all to do you honor. Sir, to-night  
We celebrate the final master-stroke  
That makes you emperor of a thousand roads,  
That gives into your hands, for your control,  
The tangled meshes of innumerable rails,  
That bind the cities of this continent  
Each unto each and help the cause of God—

Which is to bind man unto man in love."

(At that a titter ran adown the hall,  
And even the calm bearded man half-smiled.)

"Now, Sir, in token of our amity,  
In praise of your executive control,  
We give to you this golden loving-cup,"  
(Here waiters brought to him a golden cup)  
"And we would drink your health." (The  
waiter took

The golden cup and gave it to the man,  
Who smiled and nodded at receiving it.)  
"Fill to the brim! Stand up!"

The great hall rocked  
With leaping figures flashing to their feet,  
And blurred with darting arms that filled and  
raised

The glasses gleaming like a thousand dia-  
monds—

And shoutings thundered like the roaring seas!

The bearded man swayed up and gained his  
feet,

And grasped the cup and raised it like a gavel—  
And silence rang adown the quivering  
hall. . . .

He parted lips to shape a pleasant word;  
But no words came.

A strange discordant note



Jarred horrid in the silence of the feast,  
Without the heavy windows of the room,  
Where the grey street was sodden under snow,  
A broken sound of distant song was heard,  
A sound of tired voices and a drum  
Beating a weary march along the street,  
A faint and mocking travesty of song,  
A stumbling chant and a bedraggled hymn.

It swelled and grew as the long train drew  
near,  
And passed beneath the windows of the room,  
And ceased—both drum, and cracked, dis-  
cordant song;  
And in that breathless stillness someone cried:  
“Bread! Give us bread!” And then again,  
“Work! Bread!”

Immediately the horrid hymn resumed,  
The drum took up the ragged marching  
step;  
The noise passed on adown the slimy street,  
The noise grew faint adown the sodden street,  
Grew faint—grew faint—and faltered out an  
end.

The bearded man turned white and  
staggered back,  
Swayed by his chair, then suddenly sat down,  
Dropped the gold cup upon the table cloth,

Looked here, looked there, with nervous, shifting eyes,  
Smiled foolishly, and took again the cup,  
And drank the golden contents at a draught—  
And bade the feast proceed.

The merriment

Began anew; but mirthless merriment  
It proved. And till the finish of the feast,  
The guests ate, drank, and jested with no ease.  
No voices laughed out ringingly and clear;  
No soft and murmurous sound of whispering;  
No cheerful clattering of plate and glass;  
Only the memory of a distant song,  
A song of tired voices, and a drum  
Beating a weary march along the street,  
A faint and mocking travesty of song,  
A stumbling chant and a bedraggled hymn.  
So they broke up at length and went their  
ways.  
That night the order of all things was  
changed.

## THE HOUSE OF ERIC

THE wine and fire of life have entered my  
blood; I am lord of Alida.

I have won her and led her home to my hall,  
shy-glancing and startled.

Such a wife, such a woman! No man but had  
hoped to obtain her!

The wine and fire of life have entered my  
blood; I am lord of Alida.

The wine and fire of life have entered my  
blood; I am sire of a man-child.

Strong and lusty is he, golden-locked with the  
eyes of his father;

In the court they are forging the blade he shall  
bear in the brunt of the battle.

The wine and fire of life have entered my  
blood; I am sire of a man-child.

The ice and cold of death have entered my  
blood; I am reft of my man-child.

He has gone to the country of gloom and of  
sorrow and sighing;

Break the blade which was forged for his hand  
to direct in the brunt of the battle!  
The ice and cold of death have entered my  
blood; I am reft of my man-child.

The ice and cold of death have entered my  
blood; I am reft of Alida.  
Such a wife, such a woman! My grief has no  
words to recall her!  
I have put her below, with the child, in the  
embrace of the earth like iron.  
The ice and cold of death have entered my  
blood; I am reft of Alida.

## SEA SONNETS

*North*

THERE, where the massy sea outweighs the  
main—

Blank ice; tossed hillocks rounded under snow;  
Grey, grasping, twisted cliffs, an endless row,  
Their feet in frozen inlets; on a lane  
Of straying open water, all lurdane  
With iron ripples, black and very slow,  
Which, in the night, the restless northern glow  
Paints intermittent with ensanguined stain—

There, days on days, the wind is visible,  
When, like a figure in a great, grey dream,  
The heavy air with snow is ponderable;  
Or, if it cease, a small and bitter moon  
Glow, tangling in the tinkling ice her gleam,  
Where icy waves crunch a metallic tune.

*South*

THE fragile seas that cherish in their waves  
The silvery voicings of a sunnier time;  
The pearly grotts of spiral coral caves,  
The topaz-freighted, iridescent rime;

The grass, which underneath the lucent floor,  
Forgets the world to sway its livid arms;  
The lapping ripples talking to the shore:—  
The southern ocean and her sensuous charms!

Upon the silver strand the tiny shells  
Are golden coins from some wrecked galleon;  
Behind, a scimitar of sand-dunes swells;  
Beyond, the gulls are fishing, in the sun,  
Flat, azure pools that stare against the sky,  
Or wink whene'er a faint breeze loiters by.

### *The Coasters*

THE perfect curve of a bellying sail;  
The swish of white water under the  
rail;  
The sibilant song of the sharp salt wind;  
Blue skies above; blue seas behind,  
And off are we in our graceful craft  
From the harbor mouth. The little waves  
laugh  
And croon at the churning bow,  
As we charge the changing flow  
Of the tides that come and go,  
With staunch, unyielding prow.  
We skirt the coasts where the headlands rise;

---

We slip through the teeth of the jagged reef;  
The north wind blows in our eyes.  
We skim the coast by the beach that lies  
White and gleaming in noonday heat,  
With breakers thundering at its feet,  
And a faint white line of frothy foam  
Half up its breadth—but on we roam.

The fair wind falls at the close of the day.  
Out anchor! we'll ride this night in the bay.  
The darkness steals up and we fade  
In the gloom, a ghostly shade.  
Like a nun in black arrayed  
Comes night.

We are rocking here in the earliest morn,  
In the solemn hush ere the day is born,  
When the water, grey and chill,  
Oilily swells and slips,  
And rolls the helpless ships,  
As they nod at their anchor ropes.  
Behind, the precipitous slopes  
Of the barely discernible hill,  
Half-lit are grey and still.

Up leaps the sun, the jovial sun!  
Away with sleep, the day's begun!

Up creaks the sail; good! a freshening  
breeze!

Push over the tiller; hold hard with your  
knees,

For the wind begins to blow.

Then away we glide on the reddening tide

To the sea's new ecstasies;

The sea's new joys to know.



## AND A WIFE IN EVERY PORT

**S**URFEIT of kisses,  
Enough!

Leave me. I care not. Well, think of it  
later—

When your ship's on the water and sailing—  
you loved me.

I love you? O, foolish! 'Twere better to  
hate her,

She who has hardly a heart of such stuff,  
Nor even misses. . . .

Men I have known  
Before—

Some of them loved me a little—'twas pas-  
time;

Some of them handsome,—well, none of  
them moved me.

That isn't true, No! This is the last time.  
Go ere you hate me—the wind is off-shore—  
Leave me alone. . . .

## CREW PRACTICE

*ONE!*

The long lean lance of the polished  
shell,  
Tempered, springy, lithe, alive.

*Two!*

The straight thin black wake behind,  
With its attendant maelstroms in regular order.

*Three!*

The rhythmic oars that sweep out, out,  
Catch, hold, slide, come clear, dripping dia-  
monds.

*Four!*

The small clean wind that tickles on the bare  
neck,  
Lifts the curls, travels exquisitely down the  
spine.

*Five!*

The brown brawn of the moulded arm,  
Its infinite motions melting into one perfect  
movement,

*Six!*

The coxswain, one great hollow megaphoned  
mouth,  
With tense, nervous, small straining hands.

*Seven!*

The whole body and soul ardently desiring  
speed;  
And the crawl, crawl, crawl of the monotonous  
dun banks.

*Eight!*

The utter uselessness of existing, driven thus,  
Insensate, machine-like—but the glory in the  
future!

## THE TRADE WIND

I AM the monarch of sea-born winds. My  
    throne is an empty place  
Built of the buoyant, billowing breeze in the  
    loftiest bounds of space.  
I give the rein to my coursers fain to tread in  
    the upper air;  
With plangent paces and tautened traces we  
    ruffle the sea-plain bare.  
To waken, my task, the ships that bask and  
    drift in the lazy sun,  
And set them free on the leaping sea till the  
    waning months outrun:  
    Till the waning months outrun, uncurbed,  
    Till the hulks are hot for home,  
    Till the hearts of the mariners leap dis-  
        turbed—  
So they bound to the ropes and trim the sails,  
And the ship heels swiftly, the gunwale wails,  
    And spits in flecks of foam!  
    O Home!  
    And spits in flecks of foam!

---

My wanton winds have spilt the rain from the  
lips of the tilted clouds;  
Pulling and pushing the sluggish banks they  
charge in changing crowds.  
No spot or stain of cloud or rain shall sully my  
heavens clean,  
If the clouds will weep my winds will sweep  
and naught shall intervene,—  
And the sun shall beam and the waters dream  
and the sea birds cry in glee,  
For they know that I who shall never die will  
keep their eyrie free:  
Will keep their eyrie free and dry,  
Will keep their sunny sea,  
Will make the gloomy rain clouds fly—  
So they float on the lifting wave, or rise,  
And their bosoms white and their emerald  
eyes  
Are warm for the love of me!  
O Sea!  
Are warm for the love of me!

## SIRENS

MILES of tumbled rocks about a bay,  
Black and red and rugged, grim-lipped  
and cold with caverns.

Above the emerald of sloping downs against a  
sparkling sky,  
Rolling up against a cobalt sky.

Between the ship and leeward shore the sea is  
azure.

Laughing sea and dancing sea and cavernous  
with color!

All the sky has tumbled in it to stain it with its  
dye-stuff—

Dimpled, restless, curling azure flecked with  
iridescent white-caps.

Laughing wind and dancing water and beautiful the women,—

Pearl against the dun rocks where the silver  
belt of beach

Takes the breaker on its breast, decks itself  
with rustling foam,—

Bright of hair and bright of breast and wild of  
look and wild of gesture.

---

Sweet mouths curled seductively for love.  
Yet deep eyes half-regretful, half forgetful,  
half-reviving. . . .  
O wonderful destroyers, ye are living forms of  
Nature!  
Laughing wind and dancing water. Under-  
neath,—the skulls of mortals.

## THE SPIRIT IN THE SHELL

THERE is a spirit in the sea-shore shell  
And airily he sings;  
Sometimes you hear him faint as wind-blown  
bell  
Within a dell,  
Sometimes a strident din abroad he flings.

He laughs in glee and taps with tiny hands  
Upon his polished wall;  
You almost hear the rhythmic cadence of the  
sands  
When great waves fall;  
You almost hear the rustle of the foam  
What time you hear his querulous crying in  
his home.

A boisterous mirth is his on windy days—  
A drunken craze—  
You hear him beating on his prison door  
Rejoicing in his strength, and, more and more  
Making his hollow cell reverberate  
Interminate.



---

But, when the strand is still beneath the  
    moon,  
    You hear his croon,  
    His endless lullaby  
Of time, of change, of things that swift pass  
    by,  
Of lips, of death, of things that never die—  
    Mysterious rune!

## THE FOAM FAIRY

**C**RASH! and the snow-white spume piles  
                  high  
Against the indifferent rock!  
Up, up, the sparkling spindriffs fly  
Skyward with the shock!  
And, out above the ugly, shadowed stone,  
Instant, sudden, wraith-like as the dim  
New moon, there shapes a fairy form  
For but a fleeting moment of Time's flight;  
Ephemeral as is the whirl of wings  
The fleet foam brings  
A nymph's fair body into light,  
Her hair adrift, her blue eyes sure and warm,  
Green clad and grey, with long arms bare  
                  and slim—  
Down plash the sodden drops! The vision  
                  fair is gone!

BOSTON

[*As Seen From Harvard Bridge*]

I

*Dawn*

NOW softly the heavy-stealing fog rolls off  
the city's banks,  
Higher and higher it crawls above the long,  
low, level river,  
Turbidly, sinuously, clothing bridge, building,  
and city-flanks,  
All night long it has lain here—almost it  
seemed forever.  
Now with the dawn, the mist, afraid of the  
coming sun,  
Loosens its lover's embrace, rolls up and dis-  
solves in a sky  
Rosy and warm and pregnant with promise of  
day begun;  
And last comes the light itself—till the gold  
dome sparkles on high.

Great gold dome, saluting the dawn, and dominating the town,  
Symbol of that ideal toward which man yearns,  
aspires and strives.  
Below you the paltry struggle goes on (in malice and hate) for renown,  
Yet, as a seal and sign of hope—O, stand and lift up our lives!

## II

### *Noon*

Over the neutral dun of the dancing Charles  
the sparklets play—  
Desperate diamonds of hurry and flight, but  
born to be snatched away.  
Your dancing is bounded on either bank by the  
park-ways, swept and clear,  
Stretching smoothly away, away, till almost a  
mile in the rear,  
The great arched bridge with the four stone  
feet, squats in the water and lowers.  
In and out in an orderly rout, its ways are  
thronged with men;

Boston is ceaselessly busy, flags flutter on sky-  
ing towers;  
Frequent steeples rush up the sky—and over  
all the Dome again!

Under that glowing bowl the city trembles and  
glows,  
The noon-day sun looks hotly down on a city  
without repose,  
A city burdened with wealth; there ceaseless  
the gold tides flow.  
But the heart of the city—Ah, who shall say?  
Is it clean, is it great or no?

### III

#### *Evening*

The sun has been an hour behind grey Corey  
Hill,  
And from the sunset sky there falls a dove-grey  
mist;  
And ever  
The air and water turn to silence save where,  
ripple-kissed,

The long line of embankment whispers, laughs  
and talks.

And now the mist extends its tenuous arms and  
covers land and river

With tender amethyst.

The distant bridge, the shapeless town, the  
nearby walks,

Fade into curious blues

Of myriad hues;

And bank and sky and house and distant dwell-  
ings—

All changed to looming shapes and formless  
swellings—

Are like a nocturne done in brown and blue,  
More delicate than Whistler's brush could  
do—

Laden with heavy lotos and the weight of dank  
despair

This all enshrouding blue . . . coils there.  
Everywhere

Suddenly spring into being the joyous lights,  
Stringing their strands of jewels thro' the air,  
In white and yellow flights.

The deepened blueness now is decked with gold,  
The gleaming town stares mist-bound at the  
sky.

Only the dome swings free, picked out in fire.

---

O, steadfast and changeless symbol untouched  
by the new or the old,  
Even in mist and dark to you hearts still may  
aspire—  
Where picked out in golden fire, your unfet-  
tered dome swings high.

## FROM A GARDEN

AH, sweet is the wind in sun and shower,  
And soft is the sward in the Summer  
shade,  
And sweet is the sleepy, sun-drenched hour  
When noon in the cloudlets the breeze has laid,  
And sweet is the pleachèd garden's flower  
O'erspread by the shadow of leaflets frayed;  
But what is there blowing in blossoming bower  
One half as sweet as yourself, dear maid?



## LYRIC

LOVE me for the spirit that is in me,  
Not for my face;  
Love me for the lovely thoughts I shelter,  
Not for my grace.

Love me for the love of thee within me,  
The rest is fleet;  
Love me for the hidden link that binds us,—  
And yet complete.

Love me for the half of thee within me,  
Mere beauty flies;  
Love me now, and love me, Love, forever;—  
The body dies.

## TRIBUTE

**I**N you the sum and substance of the past—  
In you unnumbered women stir and speak.  
In you vague, brooding shadow-shapings seek  
To guide your hesitant footsteps sure and fast.  
In you are all the women-souls that passed  
Unknown or noted through the ages. Greek,  
Perhaps, the lovely color of your cheek;  
The treasure of your hair in Rome amassed;  
A Gallic grey the lustre of your eyes;  
Perhaps Boadicea had that grace—  
And all of you an Eve in Paradise!  
You are the cosmos-child—her sufferance,  
Moulded and shaped in plastic ignorance  
Toward the perfection of a future race.

## AFTERMATH

WELL, it was only a rose, after all,  
And the wind has pillaged its stalk;  
Though I thought as I saw it through the wall,  
In the glimpse of my daily walk,  
That a thing so fair, so perfect there,  
Would be deathless.

Well, it was only a woman's face,  
And the years have taken their toll,  
Though I thought as I saw it beyond my pace,  
In the silent desire of my soul,  
That a thing so rare, so perfect there,  
Would be deathless.

## THE BRIDGE BUILDERS

THEY cluster there, those dots against the  
sky;

So small and fragile on the ordered beams;  
The hammers shout, a red-hot rivet gleams,  
The bridge obeys, and grows beneath the eye.

They cluster here, these dots upon the sod,  
So small and fragile on the ordered frame:  
Though trite their parts, and transitory,  
fame,  
The bridge obeys, and grows from man to  
God!

## NOON-WHISTLES

**L**IKE the plumed helms of a stern array  
When the battle is well begun,  
The streaming banners of snowy steam  
Flare suddenly in the sun.

And a blare of raucous, discordant notes—  
A brilliant cacophony—  
Unites in a glorious major chord,  
Triumphant, City, for Thee!

## APRIL

WARMTH and rain, warmth and rain,  
Warmth and rain on the earth again.  
The sordid earth,  
The place of birth,  
The place of birth of the grain.  
Washed by the gentle rain from the sky,  
The buds will crack, their cases dry,  
The crocus show his purple eye,  
To edge the emerald lane.  
April, April!

But hark!  
No music now hath Nature for our ears  
But patter, patter, dropping, falling shower;  
But smiles she hath, yes, smiles amid her  
tears—  
The sun looks out, twixt dripping clouds that  
lower,  
And smiles the more—and gone are all our  
fears  
Old Winter's fled, and gone are all our fears.  
Red roofs glisten,  
There's a mist on

---

Every tree, and bush, and thicket,  
Golden walk, and garden wicket.

Here a patter,

There a patter,

Laggard rain drops dropping after  
Clouds have passed. The bluer spaces  
Widen now. Like duchess laces,  
Little feathery streamers cross them,  
Woven gracefully across them.

From the South the birds come winging  
Southern Summer with them bringing  
I, in my heart, am with them singing

April, April!

## JUNE

THE meadow, swollen with rank up-burst  
of grasses,  
Lies level to the light of the golden sun;  
Delicate dreams of daisies, one by one,  
Droop and rebound, as o'er their petals passes  
The stir of the morning breeze. In rosy  
masses,  
Like balls of billowing smoke, the apple trees  
Against the wall, are over-ripe for bees;  
And single blossoms, cupped like hands of  
lasses,  
Scatter and litter the ground at the touch of the  
wind.  
Sun's up! 'Tis June! And yesterday it  
rained. . . .  
Dust's pearl and precious, heaven's grandly  
stained  
With azure. Here discern the open mien  
Of Nature, and infrequent, baffling gained,  
The spirit underneath it—just half-seen!



## A DIAMOND DAY

FRAGILELY-sheathed, iridescent-embossed,  
In sparkle of crystal-silvery frost,  
A frozen forest dazzlingly tossed  
To a faint, soft azure sky.

Nothing there is without its ice,  
Boles have bucklers of strange device,  
Twigs twinkle their needles. Nice  
The curious craft of the frost.

Tangled boughs break, tinkle, and cry,  
Creak, squeak, rattle, brittle and dry.  
Small gold sun stalks up the sky;  
Trees stand still in the light.

Thin little wind pipes down the way,  
Brown branches, slim branches, gnarled  
branches sway,  
Rustle and rustle and rustle alway—  
Shatter to prismatic light!

## FALLING LEAVES

**F**AINT fragments of forgotten melodies  
    Flashed from the fiery fingers of the Bard  
Before time was, before the heavens were  
    starred,  
Before earth framed her straining agonies;  
The warp and woof of mighty tapestries  
Strewed for an unimagined footprint's tread,  
A carpet golden, auburn, yellow, red,  
Shimmering and sheeny in the swirling breeze;

This is the fall of the leaves in Autumn time:  
Each leaf a note of that old harmony  
Which shivers the age's taciturnity:  
Each leaf a thread in that prodigious weave,  
Worked on the web of Summer's sunny prime,  
And which naught but the Weaver shall conceive.

## CAT-TAILS

CAT-TAILS nodding brightly in the afternoon sunshine

Along a dun and dreary, blue-black ditch;  
Soft, cylindrical, and brown, and fluffy-headed,  
Green-leaved, and silver-scattered:  
Some quite new, and some wind-battered,  
Growing straightly, growing greatly,  
On the summit and upon the banks steep pitch;  
The lower almost bedded  
In the brine.

Around, about, in, out,  
Go darting busy, nervous dragon-flies,  
Blue and golden,  
Flying swift, but half-beholden  
Red and grey and green—translucent dyes,  
Sometimes resting, sometimes questing;  
But ever, ever haunting the flaunting  
Cat-tails by the brine;—  
Cat-tails nodding brightly in the afternoon sunshine.

## DEAD LEAVES

**D**O you hear them lightly rushing, pushing,  
crowding, striving, fluttering,  
Filling air and lawn and roadway with their  
intermatching, intermating,  
One by one, and ten by ten, and thousands by  
their thousands,  
In rank and file and cohort, or in mob and rout  
and riot?

Mighty Autumn, mighty Autumn is the Quick-  
ener and Destroyer;  
And the leaves that voice the voiceless earth  
are whispering, muttering.  
For the leaves from earth to earth have come,  
from earth to earth are going—  
Lying on the shadeless alleys, crowding on the  
muffled roadway.

When you tread them scattered thinly, or  
plough through them, ankle-pushing,  
While they talk and laugh and chatter, sigh and  
sob, expostulating,

Know that these are various voices of the dead  
that earth embraces:

Faint and fragile as the leaves are, so the dear  
forgotten voices.

## A RAINY SUNSET

ATHWART the silvered rain the sunset  
gleams  
Gaudy and golden through the filing rain;  
And, built across the heaven, a rosy lane,—  
Where wandering hellish fire incessant teems—  
Still blushes for the kiss of the dead sunbeams.  
Beneath, the muffled lineaments of the hills  
With rounded depths, a shifting silver fills—  
The shifting silver of departed dreams—  
Are wet and black and far and as unreal  
As if this were a shadow world, and they,  
The mythic mountains of a former day.  
Still in the stealing silence rings the rain,  
The tears of Earth which weeps a bitter pain,  
A bitter pain no glowing sky can heal.

VILLANELLE OF A NORTHERN LIGHT

**I**N the cold beauty of the waning moon,  
Low over level fields of shining snow,  
I hear the memory of an Iceland rune,

Sung in the elder days—a stately tune  
Wherein the red and bearded vikings go  
In the cold beauty of the waning moon.

Hush! Far and fragile, tiny as a croon,  
Beatings of subtle elfin footsteps? No,  
I hear the memory of an Iceland rune.

'Tis Wodin's heavy tread, or Freya's shoon,  
Or mighty Thor who strikes a hammer-blow,  
In the cold beauty of the waning moon?

No. O'er the blue and glassy-smooth lagoon  
There is a winding music falling slow:  
I hear the memory of an Iceland rune.

For jealous Time withholds the final boon;  
So, when the level field is glowing low  
In the cold beauty of the waning moon,  
I hear the memory of an Iceland rune.

## A NIGHT-IMPRESSION

THE moon burns in a silver mist  
Like a rotting tree-trunk phosphor-  
kissed,  
Looms and burns in the heavy air—  
Low-hung and swaying there  
Where the grey mist spells Despair.

Half of the wan road has the moon;  
The other half is a blind lagoon.  
Bright, wan line where the moonshine lags  
The road climbs out o'er its upper crags,  
Where sultry vapor loiters, drags.

The sodden meadow, grey and dank,  
Rolls up sheer to the drumlin flank:  
Against the moon I plainly see  
Tortured cedars, one, two, three;  
One, two three, and one, two, three.

Nether dark has no such night  
As this grey, morbid, stealing light.  
Life burns low in this listless air,  
Heavy with carking, eating Despair;  
Despair! the grey moon mocks—'Despair!'



## LIFE

**F**OOT by foot up a shrouded stair,  
Wearily and crying,  
Toiling and sighing,  
Beating of breasts and tearing of hair—  
Foot by foot up a shrouded stair.

League on league down a gilded way,  
Carelessly chaffing,  
Shallowly laughing,  
Revel and joyaunce and beautiful clay,—  
League on league down a gilded way.

## DESOLATION

THE cold wind blows in the apple tree,  
Where Autumn's fruit was fair to see.  
There is no thing to comfort me.

The grass has vanished under snow.  
It must be cold and chill below.  
It would be cold to me I know.

The cold sleet beats against the pane.  
The sky is full of bitter rain.  
It is less bitter than my pain.

I pray you, chilly winds that blow,  
I pray you, bitter flakes of snow,  
I pray you tell me, if you know,

Where did my wandering lover go? . . .

I would that he were here again. . . .

I think that he would pity me. . . .

## LIFE-WEARY

WHAT if I say to the new born,  
    "Glory on earth; in heaven be peace,"  
Since angels have lost, this painful morn,  
    One of their choir by birth's decrease?  
Why, if I sing that, I shall say:  
    "Earth is a vale of tears!"

What if I say to the new dead,  
    "Glory in heaven, on earth be peace,"  
Since angels have gained, this painless morn,  
    One of their choir by death's increase?  
Why, if I sing that, I shall say,  
    "Heaven is a height of tears!"

O for a lifeless world to lie in!  
Not to be born in, not to die in . . .  
    'Tis all I want of thee.  
O, Power, grant it to me!

## AFTER BATTLE

**H**AIL! How thou comest in pride from the  
battle!

Crowned with the glorious chaplet of zeal.  
Arms and the chariot how well they become  
thee,

Buckler and corslet and helmet and steel!

See! thou art pale! Is it anger resurgent?  
Righteous is wrath 'gainst a cowardly foe.  
Mighty thine arms! Are they lax?—They are  
wearied,

Wearied with hewing and bending the bow.

See, here is blood! Here is blood of the foe-  
men.

No. It is thine! Thou hast struggled and  
slain.

Awful thy wounds—but wounds are a glory,  
And blood is the sign of a glorious pain.

Wilt thou not speak? See, I bend me before  
thee;

I, thy true wife, I bend, I beseech.

Grant'st me no word then? Ay, that becomes  
thee.

Death hath no speech. Nay. Death hath no  
speech.

## A HYMN AFTER THE GREEK

[*In Choriambics*]

SURF and smoke of the surf, emerald bright,  
    green and the froth of foam;  
Cliffs in towering shafts, purple and mauve,  
    crimson and grey and black;  
Ruby, faintly maroon sands, and the blown dust  
    of the land and loam  
Pounded, crushed in the mill, beaten and flung  
    out from the rock—and back:

Upward, high on the cliffs cloven by wind, rain  
    and the hand of heat:  
Fleeced with grass of an hue exquisite, pale  
    green with a hint of blue;  
Sprinkled thickly with gems, flowers of gold,  
    couch for a queen most meet;  
Yea, if you will see, here is She laid, Love and  
    her lovers, too!

## VOICELESS

**I**S there a painter to picture the moonlight?  
Is there a singer to compass the sea?  
Is there a poet can tell of the starlight?  
Then how can I tell of my longing for thee?

## REMEMBRANCE

[*From the Spanish of G. A. Becquer*]

YOUR eyes are blue, and when you smile,  
    Their perfect clarity recalls to me  
The tremulous gleam of rosy morning, while  
    It coloreth the sea.

Your eyes are blue, and when you weep,  
    With transient, crystal tears the blue is wet;  
Like drops of dew that in the dawning sleep  
    Upon a violet.

Your eyes are blue, and when I gaze  
    Therein where soul and spirit hidden are,  
It seems I see the solitary blaze  
    That points the evening star!



THE MARQUIS OF MALPICA'

[*From the Spanish*]

WHENE'ER the Marquis of Malpica,  
The Holder of the Royal Key,  
To questions asked, replies with silence,—  
He says his all, unwittingly.

## COMING HOME FROM THE PLAY

[*Midnight*]

YOU leave the yellower splotch of light  
That marks the city's nightly fête,  
And turn into your quiet street  
That stretches dim and straight.

Monotonously, block on block,  
A wall of homes on either hand.  
In ordered way, at every street,  
The blue electrics stand.

Your grotesque shadow goes before,  
Or limply trails along behind,  
And threatens you with goblin arms,  
Or flees you like the wind.

And, huddled there, beneath the light,  
Against the arching, iron post,  
A woman, sere and thin and sharp,  
Not twenty at the most.

---

Like a live thing, a tiny wind  
    Snaps at her cheap and tawdry clothes :—  
High on its mast, aloofly pure,  
    The steady radiance glows.

You pass her with averted face  
To try to miss her smiling leer,  
Avoid her low, suggestive voice,  
And what you would not hear.

You mount your worn, familiar steps,  
And enter soft the dim-lit hall,  
And shut the world outside the door,  
And wonder at it all. . . .

## ANTIQUITAS AUROSA

IN Greece of old, they led a different life.  
(*This from my thoughts*) There was a  
fair abode—

The course of life was one long, golden road;  
Afar were sordid, ugly, futile strife,  
Like that with which our modern time is rife:  
But singing, joying, loving—all in mirth,  
One watched old beauty or new beauty's birth—  
Beauty and Being, wedded man and wife.

Not so: though now we see naught but the gold,  
(*And this from my thoughts*) there was the  
grey, to fold

And flaunt its sordid rags about, as well;  
Beneath, the usual crusted human mold;—  
Did one man dine on meat and muscatel  
Another starved. Did this one rise, this fell.

## EXOTIC

**H**AIR not gold, but dross of gold made  
    bright;  
Eyes not brown, but tawny as the sands;  
Small cool mouth that sparkles with a light  
Laughter. Little sun-kissed feet and hands.

This is she who takes the heart of man;  
Takes it in her cruel hands, a trust—  
Pledge concluded where a love began—  
Gives it back as blackened ash and dust.

This is she who tricks and smiles, and blows  
Kisses with light lips no death forgets;  
This is she who plays with love and knows  
Nothing of the pain which love begets.

Is there no sentience of full tragedy,  
No sorrow in your heart, no little trace  
Of this great helpless sorrow you set free  
In seal or sign of penitence on your face,

Judith? or any sweetness in your ways;  
Any warm swelling in your perfect breast;  
Any warm softness in your haughty gaze?  
Is it all mockery of my unrest?

Hate! Can one hate this separated thing?  
Does it avail to hate the supple cat  
Because it struck and maimed you, proffering  
Friendship and food and haven? Yet, in that,

Lies the hard answer. You would far away,  
Out where the sea is jewelled by the wind,  
Diamond with diamond matching, swim and  
play—  
Or in green mirth of meadows pleasure find.

Nature—you are a part of that great wheel,  
Judith. You torture, as She does, unseen,  
Inscrutable, and purposeful. You feel  
One with her, shrined in her aloof demesne.

"I feel this tree a comrade, trusted friend."  
Or, "How the day caresses favored me."  
Fool! you are blasted by great cold. Forfend  
That Nature should so stoop to you, or see.

---

Such is Judith—altogether Hers.  
Judith has caught the subtle secrecy,  
Nature she knows to bend, herself averse  
From any kindly feeling, as is She,—

Such is Judith. In the tidal-breast,  
Swelling along the beach, she hears a Voice.  
Deep in the faint grey forest she may rest,  
Rest and be comforted. She may rejoice,

Shout with the splendor of the clarion dawn,  
Rock in the drowsy cradle of the noon,  
Sleep in the dusty glimmer of the spawn  
Of starry worlds, warmed by the gentle moon.

Such is Judith . . . God! to swim and  
play,  
Laugh with the ripples of the shelving shore,  
Feel me a part of that great Vast, away  
From God and man, with her forevermore!

## ALWAYS TO GROW

**S**PIRIT of all things changes and grows:  
Last year's canker is this year's rose,  
Next year's lily perhaps. None knows.

That which was foul shall come to be clean:  
That which was hidden shall come to be seen  
Glory, nobility, deep in the mean.

Life leaps up with the throb of the world:  
Harder and harder its blows are hurled.  
Known! Where the unknown lay, close-furled.

Grant then, spirit, thy fearless grace:  
Toward the future set my face—  
Shall I be halt in so glorious a race?



## NOT LETHE

**B**UBBLES in Circe's wine;  
    Froth of a cup of poppy;  
The taste of the lips of a Lotos-eater;  
The friendly feel of an icy death in voluptuous  
    snow;  
The utter languor of a Summer noon;  
You!  
Aye; but not Lethe!

ACROSTIC SONNET TO COLORS AND  
CAROLINE

**C**URIOUS it is to find, these latter days,  
A soul indignant at the world's dull eyes;  
Red is the fervent Bible which she buys,  
O such a red! and all she owns one blaze—  
Long-satisfying colors that should raise  
(If they were courteous) felicitous cries—  
Not a phantasma of cacophonies—  
Even a harmonious match of blended praise.

Do you be gracious, colors, let us see  
Upon all fabrics, textures she employs  
Deep-lustred tones of yours that man enjoys:  
Let you be flawless, her *results* will prove;  
Endanger nothing, though her work be free—  
You must be moved, and first of all must move!

## DEPARTURE FROM PORT

“**A**LL clear before us?” saith the master.  
“All clear!” the pilot saith.  
“Aye, save death!”  
Mused the master.

## CREPUSCULE

WHAT joy, against the dim, grey window-pane,  
Beyond which lies the dim, grey dying west,  
To see again my mother sit at rest,  
Pale with a pallor no warm sun could stain,  
Fighting the anguish that for years had lain  
Grim and unconquered in her woman-breast;  
To hear her brave voice by no pain distressed;  
To know her all material flesh again:

For thus she sat at eve when light was frail  
Without, no light or sound within the room;  
Slim, fragile, tender, by her pain made pale,  
Ah, could I reach her, groping through the  
gloom,  
Kneel at her feet and lay my worn head there  
And feel her comforting fingers on my hair.

## THE GRATEFUL DEAD

THE grateful dead, they say, lie snug and  
close

Under the smooth, soft sloping of the grass.  
Grateful indeed because above them pass  
No other steps than those of wind or bird—  
No other sound is heard.

For without eyes we see, and earless, hear;  
Sweeter is this than nights of restless mood,  
Sweeter than nights of blank infinitude,  
Sweeter than ghostly pageants of a dream,  
Half-caught, of things that seem.

Another life have we than those who live,  
Another death have we than those who die.  
Mortal, and ghost and angel pass us by—  
Mortal and ghost and angel have one breath—  
Die, would ye learn of death.

## EX CARTHAGINE

*Loquitur gubernator:*

SO I turn the helm and the hull slides clear,  
    (*Now leave the rest to me*)  
For spattered out of the din I hear  
The sound of the sea, the sudden sea  
That lives and laughs to leap at me,  
And holds my vessel dear;  
    (*So rest ye easy here*)  
For I know the way to steer,  
For I guide my ship to sea.

Cast away!  
We are sailing to-day  
Beyond the blue borders of the bay!  
The last rope splashes; the ship heels;  
The lush green ripples quarrel  
At the stem, where the plaited laurel  
Decks the divinity;  
And the whole lithe vessel feels  
The lure of the outer sea.

So I notch the prow on the sinking sun  
At the edge of the endless sea,  
(*Now leave the rest to me*)  
For play's done, toil's begun—  
Let women weep, *we* weep no more,  
Our eyes are bright for the distant shore,  
(*Yet rest ye easy here*)  
For I know the way to steer  
Thro' the paths of the pathless sea.

*Cantant naute:*

Below in the hold, for gold untold,  
Are piled the bales of our future sales,  
Bronze and tin and iron therein,  
Ivory thin, and the gloss of skin,  
Chamois fine, and the glint of wine  
Quenched in jars of a new design—  
    Bales, bales in the hold below!  
Viands meet for a king to eat,  
Chryselphantine his jewelled seat,  
Or, if he care to anoint his hair,  
Here's Phrygian oil that the makers swear  
Smells riotously of the parsley bed,  
Or of roses red when their heads are  
    shed—  
    Bales, bales in the hold below!

Rare old woods whence a smell exudes  
For perfuming women's chattels and goods;  
Shields and glaives that a *barbaros* craves,  
Swords and knives for the taking of lives,  
Weapons chased and goblets traced,  
Pattern with pattern interlaced—

Bales, bales in the hold below!  
Amber yellow and onyx mellow;  
Ruby, emerald, amethyst,  
Diamond glyptics—or a twist  
Of pale pink pearls in a bracelet,  
An amulet, or a carcanet,  
Or, richer still, in an armlet set—

Bales, bales in the hold below!  
But best of all for the glance to fall  
Is there, in a coign by the timber-wall—

There's a treasure worthy a man's desire,  
The lust of the buyer, the skill of the dyer,  
Lucent and fraught with carnelian fire,  
In tunic and mantle, the murex-mire,  
The perfect purple, the purple of Tyre—

Bales, bales in the hold below!

*Loquitur gubernator:*

So I turn the helm to the western blaze of the  
sun,



Aye, even so, till the crimson haze of the  
sail

And the crimson round of that sinking fire  
are one.

On, on! proud-hearted lords! Aspire!  
Prevail!

## IN REMEMBRANCE

**I**T is hard and painful to speak of those lately dead; it is harder still to set down for the world which knew them scarcely, or not at all, a record of the few obvious experiences called their life, and the personal impressions of their demeanor and conduct, termed their character. How much more difficult such an annotation to their achievements becomes, when the work of the deceased must represent his first and last appearance before the general public, the introduction and farewell!

The simple details of his life cannot be of absorbing interest to the world at large; nor is his character wholly explicable to one who saw only the last phase of it. As for his many friends, they feel they knew him, but they cannot speak. Death ties the tongue of intimacy, and delicacy forbids the utilization of too personal data. It is as if one exposed love-letters. Numerous as were Paul's friendships, they seemed peculiarly inviolable. His letters were among his best writings; pungent, terse, idiomatic, full of caustic wit and affectionate rail-

lery and incisive criticism, they constitute the clearest image of him to his intimate correspondents. The circle of his friends was remarkable for the breadth and variety of their interests, and Paul was equally at ease were the intercourse born of art, music, philosophy, science, athletic sports, or the more elemental human relations.

It is the genial and considerate host, the ready listener and outspoken critic, who is remembered oftener than the other,—still the same Paul, but in the clutch of unbearable, immitigable torments, lying helpless in drug-induced coma, or fighting up to the surface of consciousness from the depths. After a struggle of over a year and a half, the horror and pain of which no mind in health can grasp, the terrible disease, tumor of the spine, had its way. During that period he displayed extraordinary powers of endurance. The indefatigable creative energy which had sustained him through years of health did not subside until the end. Before his fatal illness he had read omnivorously, produced voluminously short-stories, poems, plays, critical articles and even the portion of a novel, and musical compositions of considerable power. It was a frequent occur-

rence for him to write through the greater part of the night, until the early morning hours. While confined at the Infirmary of the Cambridge Hospital, he wrote (at who knows what expense of body and spirit!) some of his best poems, and criticisms; and six months later, long after hope had been abandoned by medical opinion, he composed an acrostic in sonnet form, of a brilliance and artistic ingenuity truly astounding. Even in the last months of his sickness, his mind was filled with literary and musical projects. He was tormented by themes that played through his head, demanding transcription. For a while he tried a sort of shorthand method of notation in an endeavor to lessen the fatigue of writing notes, but the mental effort proved exhausting, and he was compelled to relinquish his attempts. Everything had to yield to the exigence of his condition. Books, the usual recourse from painful inertia or ennui, lasted longer; but these also had to be withdrawn, as his little remaining strength was required to oppose the ceaseless onslaughts of suffering. And he read with such swift, comprehensive avidity that reading aloud by others was unendurable. His nerves suffered exquisite refinement. A careless step, a discordant voice,

or a touch on the skin were as shocks from live wires, and every emanation from those about him seemed to carry with it powers of life and death.

He who had delighted in all legitimate pleasures of the senses, in bodily and gustatory vigor, beauty of sound, color, odors, and tactile impressions, experienced their perverted and destructive states more and more keenly as his powers of resistance waned. His delectations became an inquisition that condemned without defence and tortured without mercy. His philosophy of life, moreover, was too ruthless and unflinching to serve as buoyancy in hours of depression that verged on despair. His religious faith had grown steadily away from orthodoxy into something that appeared neither to comfort spiritually nor wholly to satisfy intellectually. He seems to have left life before discovering adequate compensation for its forbidding aspects,—shadows, it may be said, into which his eyes saw quite clearly. He was not romantic and had no illusions, in the usual sense.

It was sheer strength of will and a physique too tenacious to be easily destroyed that sustained him throughout. Who will forget the

quick level look as one entered the sick-room, the powerful grip of the emaciated hand, the conversation casual as if the intruder were not always waiting just without? His activities other than intellectual had been strenuous; a speedy boxer, who could give and take punishment, fond of skiing, tobogganning, camping, riding and sailing. No poet has ever expressed the fine rhythms of action more intensely, at the same time with such appreciation of their æsthetic values. No poetry is more masculine, more replete with healthful verve and resilient *élan*. It is this sense of a capacity for action that gives vitality not only to his dramatic pieces, but even to the poems of delicate description and contemplation. They are terse, sinewy and animate with that movement whose abounding pulsation he felt within himself. He noted them in language of precise discrimination, and with a realization of balance and reserve that guided a natural exuberance to the Hellenic quality of simple, appropriate form.

If, during health, one could divine by the easy, graceful, assured carriage of Paul's well-built figure his athletic interests, there was determination to match, perceptible in the strong,

resolute head, the militant chin that terminated the lean, firmly modelled face, the thin, sensitive, tightly-drawn lips whose smile was often a little grim rather than merely amiable. The dark eyebrows slanting acutely toward a point of contingency above the strongly-ridged nose, aided the mobility of his face in its modulations, lending an air now of quizzical *diablerie*, or ironical directness, or inscrutable, penetrating intentness, or again of mild, humorous friendliness; and they served as fitting base to the open, thoughtful forehead that curved up proudly to meet the crest of black hair, waving not too riotously.

But it was the eyes that marked him among his fellows as critic and poet. Sometimes keenly practical and absorbed in the things immediately before him, they could be, and were, habitually dreamy, distantly contemplative. He was widely respected for the soundness of his judgment, for he perceived, occasionally with some prejudice, but oftener with great intuitive justice of insight, the relations of life and of art. He was not deceived by appearances. He hated pretentiousness, sententious moralizing, academic arrogance and crass stupidity, and if his criticisms (they were not judgments) ap-

peared severe even to acridness at times, it was because he refused to be conciliated or wheedled into compromise. He felt with almost bitter keenness the cleft between his own and the preceding generation, the destruction of traditional beliefs and usages, the advent of new, more unhampered and more exacting criterions of conduct. That he was thoroughly in sympathy with the humanitarian movement of to-day is evident in that splendid warning and prophecy, *The Two Feasts*. His work, when occasion demands, is bold and frank, chastened, however, by his omnipresent respect for form and fitting beauty. Yet with a mind progressive and fertile for the future, he respected all sincerity, though it might seem outworn. He had nothing of the heedless cruelty of insurgent youth, nor was he a blatant propagandist. He realized the pathos of creative evolution and the poem, *In the Temple of Azzi-Rep*, utters the sadness of deposed gods and deserted temples. To hold one's place in the ungovernable swirl of new ideas and experiences is difficult. Nature is a merciless opponent.

"Harder and harder the blows are hurled  
Known, where the unknown lay, close furled."



"Shall I be halt in so glorious a race?" he cries.

He possessed that rare virtue, scrupulous integrity of thought. He subjected all experiences and impressions, were it a symphony or a number of *The Harvard Monthly*, to searching analysis, extracting with triumphant precision the fallacies or felicities therein implicated. Yet he also knew the secret of building complexly from the simplest elements, and his best lyrics and short stories witness that power. He had, indeed, the impulse and energy for labor, "the infinite capacity for taking pains"; but he had for complement the plenary wisdom of genius that sits in judgment on its deeds, mindful of its limitations and foreseeing its ends. But whatever efficiency experts declare, no scrupulousness, however imperative, no toil, however prolonged, not even the most determined will can create greatly without perfection of the instrument, without inherent sources of inspiration.

Underneath a personality somewhat austere, in a New England way, there was something warm, bright, vivid and flaming, come down to him from his French Canadian ancestry, perhaps. His character was witness to that Mar-

riage of Heaven and Hell, of which Blake speaks, the union of passion and intellect, power and reflection, delight in experience and control of experience, and as neither predominated he seemed to have no weakness to call vice. If he suffered from the green morbidity of his age, it was well concealed. That pardonable causticity was as the bracing tang of those hills (the Berkshires, for which he had a profound love), and whose "humble eremite" he was, on many expeditions. He craved color, particularly scarlet; but an artist's appreciation of the pictorial led him to fix limits to profusion and saved him from the bizarre. One of his last interests was in the bindings of his books. The selection of proper colors and leathers was a real delight, and their return from the bindery an occasion for eulogizing. An aptitude for sound, color and mobile rhythms led him to constant experiments, curious, interesting, nearly always successful and beautiful in effect. He accomplished feats unknown to the English language, and so has made permanent additions to our literature.

Paul Mariett felt the enthusiasm of discovery. He felt that existence was unsparing. He endeavored to extract the intrinsic from the ac-

cidental in love and beauty, in life and death. With all his joyous virility there runs through his work, almost from the beginning, an impending melancholy, that is neither the immature cheerlessness of sceptical youth nor the unrealizable unreality of a dreamer, but something unaccountably sinister, and premonitory, a quality that pervades his most powerful and poignant lyrics, flashing out finally, nakedly mystical, in the poem, *The Grateful Dead*. Concerning this side of his character, of which he spoke rarely, and that cursively, little is to be said, much to be left to the "eternal imagination."

When every ordinary channel of interest had been closed to him, one by one, there remained primary affections supplying an almost exhausted stamina. He had to run the interminable gauntlet of the moments and endure a nightmare without explication. If he prayed for deliverance, he continued until the last to express hope, but with a kind of critical deliberation, as if not urging too much of nature. His few remaining social interests seemed trivial, matters of food and the noting of the inevitable course of the malady. At last "the depths came to look into him" and his aspect

was of gaunt, strained unearthliness, the pallid splendor of approaching death. Covered by flowers, later, all traces of the struggle had vanished, and his face seemed pure marble, a mask of calm, imperturbable strength.

GEORGE W. CRONYN

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